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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEWED BY *Malcolm Lawrence* DATE *7/14/80*
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ACTION: USMission NATO PRIORITY

INFO: USDEL MC

JOINT STATE/DEFENSE MESSAGE

Subject: DecDef Posture Statement on SAFEGUARD

1. Following is abridged text of SAFEGUARD portion of SecDef Posture Statement which will be released on Friday 20 Feb when Secretary Laird appears before Joint Session of Senate Armed Services Committee and Defense Subcommittee of Senate Appropriations Committee. No release or discussion permitted before 0900 Washington time on Friday 20 Feb. At that time you may pass this information to SYG Brosio and other delegations on UNCLAS basis. Complete posture statement will be ~~xxx~~ pouched ~~for multiple copies for distribution to xxxxxx~~ when available.

2. Begin abridged text:

A. The evident and continuing threats from the Soviet Union and Communist China force upon us necessity of continuing progress on SAFEGUARD anti-ballistic missile defense system in FY 1971. We hope SALT will lead to a reduced Soviet threat but, meanwhile, it is essential to preserve, as far as possible, all available

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OSD/PA - Mr. Friedheim
PM - Mr. Spiers

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strategic force options in this transitional budget year. Without SAFEGUARD increment provided by this budget, we would be faced now with the hard decisions about adding immediately to our offensive systems rather than being able to await hoped-for progress in SALT.

B. Decision of Administration to request continuation of phased, orderly, ~~PHASED~~ SAFEGUARD program for ballistic missile defense -- going beyond the Congressionally-approved Phase I -- was based on:

- a. Careful consideration of the original objectives of SAFEGUARD defense, and of the need to maintain the President's flexibility on future options to either curtail or expand the system;
- b. The continued Chinese progress in nuclear weapons;
- c. The evolving and increasing Soviet offensive weapon threat;
- d. Our determination to strengthen possibilities for a successful Strategic Arms Limitation agreement;
- e. The Options currently available, considering technical progress and budgetary factors.
- f. The current international situation;
- g. Our desire to continue emphasis on strategic defensive

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systems rather than being forced to deploy additional offensive weapons or to be forced to move forward now, with making a portion of our MINUTEMAN force mobile.

C. As the President has indicated, rather than focusing on a single purpose, SAFEGUARD has been and continues to be designed to achieve several objectives against a combination of Soviet and Chinese threats.

D. Communist China has continued to test nuclear weapons suitable for missiles. Estimates of the date by which they might have an initial ICBM capability vary from 1973 to the mid-1970's. In either case, we must proceed with the area coverage of SAFEGUARD if we are to protect our population from this threat in the late 1970's.

E. We know that the Chinese have the capability of testing an ICBM in the immediate future and that they are likely to have an operational capability in the next several years. A measured and orderly deployment of SAFEGUARD, taking only the minimum steps necessary to preserve our ability to meet the threat as it evolves, is both the most prudent and most economical course we can pursue.

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F. It is apparent that the growth of Soviet forces could present a severe threat to the survival of the MINUTEMAN and bomber forces by the mid-70s. We are now faced with the following possibilities concerning MINUTEMAN:

a. That the Soviets do not increase the deployment of the SS-9 and the SS-11, do not develop a MIRV for the SS-9, and do not improve ICBM accuracy. Under these circumstances there is no need for a defense of the MINUTEMAN force;

b. That the Soviets stop building ICBMs beyond those now operational or started; they do not develop a MIRV for the SS-9; but they do improve the accuracy of their entire ICBM force. Under these circumstances, the force could constitute a threat to the MINUTEMAN force and SAFEGUARD would be quite effective against that threat;

c. That the Soviets deploy a MIRV on the ~~SS-9~~ SS-9, improve their ICBM accuracy, and do not stop building ICBMs at this time, but continue building them at their present rate. We would then be faced in the mid-70s with a threat which is much too large to be handled by the level of defense envisioned in the

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SAFEGUARD system without substantial improvement and modification.

G. The above factors presented us with a most difficult decision involving three basic choices:

a. Should we react to the threats which are possible for the mid-70s and pay, beginning immediately, the cost of this concern?

b. Should we hope that the threat is only modest and stay with the present SAFEGUARD deployment?

c. Should we assume there will be no serious threat and do nothing?

H. It can be recognized that the threat could actually turn out to be considerably larger than the SAFEGUARD defense is designed to handle. That is one reason we have decided to pursue several courses which should lead to less expensive options for the solution to this problem than expanding SAFEGUARD to meet the highest threat level. We have further decided to continue deployment of SAFEGUARD because the additional cost needed to defend a portion of MINUTEMAN is small if the full area defense is bought. SAFEGUARD can also serve as a core for growth options in defense of MINUTEMAN, if required.

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I. If, in the future, the defense of MINUTEMAN has to be expanded, new and smaller additional radars placed in MINUTEMAN fields would be less costly than the SAFEGUARD Missile Site Radar (MSR) because they would not have to cover such large areas. For this reason, we will pursue a program to determine the optimum radar for such a defense and begin the development of this radar and associated components in FY 1971. At the same time, the Air Force will pursue several other options for solving the survivability problem of the land-based missile systems.

J. There are, then, several options. The SAFEGUARD defense will serve as a nucleus. We can add a hardpoint defense system if necessary or we may later choose to base part of the force in a different basing concept than the present force. Proceeding with further deployment of SAFEGUARD in FY 1971 postpones the necessity of committing ourselves now either to a mobile MINUTEMAN (on land or afloat) or to further hardening of MINUTEMAN silos. However, should the Soviet threat continue to grow beyond levels that can be reasonably handled by active defense, I can assure this Committee that I will not hesitate to recommend at any time

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accelerated development of ULMS should the nature of the threat warrant it in the future.

K. In summary, our decision now to proceed with further deployment of SAFEGUARD gives us another year in which to pursue SALT without ourselves exacerbating the arms control environment through actions on offensive systems. We can do this while still providing a hedge against moderate threats and an option to meet, if necessary, a heavier threat.

L. Also, the production of Soviet nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines is continuing at two shipyards. By the mid-1970s the Soviets will probably have a submarine force capable of destroying most of our alert bomber and tanker force before it can fly to safety. This same submarine force threatens our ~~MAXIMUM~~ National Command Authorities. We need the SAFEGUARD area defense to blunt the first few minutes of such an attack so that our bombers can escape and our command system can execute its prime function. Otherwise, we must turn to expensive alternatives such as rebasing or continuous airborne alert.

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M. Naturally, the recommendation we are making for the continued but carefully limited deployment of SAFEGUARD defenses is in full recognition that Strategic Arms Limitation Talks with the Soviets will resume in April for the discussion of many complex issues. Among the factors that have led us to recommend this measured and modified continuation are both the continued growth of the Soviet strategic threat to the United States, and the fact that many possible agreements with the Soviet Union could include some form of missile defense -- which would be consistent with our national security objectives and the legitimate security interests of the Soviet Union. The decision to begin a modified Phase 2 deployment does not preclude an agreement on low ABM levels.

N. In addition, it must be borne in mind that the Soviets have no control over the Communist Chinese, whose threat we must therefore cope with regardless of SALT. As President Nixon recently stated: "Ten years from now, the Communist Chinese, among others, may have a significant nuclear capability . . . then it will be very important for the United States to have some kind of defense so that nuclear blackmail could not be used."

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O. An orderly, measured, flexible but ongoing SAFEGUARD

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defense program will help maintain our relative positive position in SALT and improve the chances for a successful outcome.

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P. An important part of our proposed program is its flexibility.

It can be modified as required by changes in the threat which result from arms limitation agreements or unilateral actions by the Soviets or Chinese Communists. In the meantime, it is essential that we continue this defensive program.

End Abridged Text.

3. Posture statement will be provided NATO Embassies Washington at 0900 on Friday 20 February.

END

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